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Economic and Social Council

Provisional

20 September 2011

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Resumed organizational session of 2011

Provisional summary record of the 11th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 18 May 2011, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Kapambwe ..... (Zambia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*) (E/2011/L.9)

Draft decision E/2011/L.9 entitled "Economic and Social Council event to discuss the transition from relief to development"

1. **Mr. de Bassompierre** (Belgium) introduced the draft decision, saying that the text reflected a consensus reached during informal consultations. He hoped that its adoption would result in the holding of an interesting event.

2. *Draft decision E/2011/L.9 was adopted.*

Basic programme of work of the Council (*continued*) (E/2010/15/Add.1)

Draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Section for Emerging and Conflict-related Issues to the level of a division and establishing a governmental committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings"

Draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Centre for Women to the level of a division and follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab countries after fifteen years: Beijing+15"

3. **The President** noted that Mr. Koterec of Slovakia, Vice-President, had sent a letter dated 12 May 2011 to all Members of the Council circulating copies of the two outstanding draft resolutions in Section B of Chapter I of document E/2010/15/Add.1, containing proposals to replace "Endorses" by "Takes note of" in paragraph 1 of each resolution. The amendments had been circulated under the silence procedure and no objections had been received.

4. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Council) read out a statement on the programme budget implications of the two outstanding draft resolutions in Section B of Chapter I of the document, as amended, which stated that the implementation of the draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Section for Emerging and Conflict-related Issues to the level of a division and establishing a governmental committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings" and the draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Centre for Women to the level of a division and follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab countries after fifteen years: Beijing+15" would entail no programme budget implications for the current biennium, although in both cases, the programme budget implications for the next biennium would have to be reviewed.

5. **The President** invited the Council to consider the draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Section for Emerging and Conflict-related Issues to the level of a division and establishing a governmental committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings", as amended.

6. *The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted.*

7. **The President** invited the Council to consider the draft resolution entitled "Upgrading the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Centre for Women to the level of a division and follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab countries after fifteen years: Beijing+15", as amended.

8. *The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted.*

9. **The President** said that the Council had thereby concluded its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2010/15/Add.1). He took it that the Council wished to take note of the report as a whole.

10. *It was so decided.*

Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments (*continued*)

Outstanding vacancies postponed from the previous sessions

11. **The President** said that although he had intended to hold elections to fill the vacancies on the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, it had been brought to his attention that some delegations were still engaged in consultations. He therefore suggested that the elections be postponed until the following week.

12. **Mr. Fiallo** (Ecuador) said that although he did not object to postponing the elections, he was uncomfortable with the situation. His country's candidacy had been submitted before 28 April but, as a result of an internal error, it had not been put on the agenda and his capital had received no response from the Bureau. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States was not adequately represented in the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, and some vacancies had been pending for up to two years. He hoped that no more errors would be made and that elections could take place the following week, as proposed.

13. **The President** took it that the Council wished to postpone the elections until the following week.

14. *It was so decided.*

Other matters

Proposed amendment to the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by its 1975 Protocol

15. **The President** said that Mr. Grauls of Belgium, Vice-President, was holding informal consultations on the amendment proposed by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to article 49, paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 (e) of the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by its 1975 Protocol. Those informal consultations were ongoing and would likely conclude by the end of the week. He would inform the members of the Council of the outcome of the informal consultations in a letter.

Informal special event of the Council on South Sudan

16. **The President** said that the new State of South Sudan would come into being on 9 July 2011 and would face major political, security, development and peacebuilding challenges. The emergence of that new State called for the early mobilization of the international community and the United Nations system to provide adequate support, taking into account lessons learned from other comparable experiences. The Economic and Social Council offered a unique platform for engaging various stakeholders in line with its mandate related to development, humanitarian action, United Nations system coordination and development cooperation.

17. Therefore, the Bureau, in consultation with all relevant actors, planned to hold an informal event on promoting durable peace and sustainable development in South Sudan. The meeting would be an opportunity to highlight the importance of development to peacebuilding and promote coordination and coherence in the work of the United Nations system and its partners. Plans were under way to hold the event on 7 June 2011 and further information would be made available in due course. If any other bodies wished to join the Council in sponsoring the event, they were welcome to do so.

Highlights of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

18. **The President** said that he had attended the recent Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul. It had been heartening to see so many high-level officials from around the world coming together to discuss the issue of development in the least developed countries. Intensive negotiations had continued on the draft Programme of Action and Istanbul Declaration, in parallel to the official sessions of the Conference. The outcome of the Istanbul Conference represented a major stride for the least developed countries. Important commitments had been made on accelerating investment and aid to the private sector. Other key themes in the Programme of Action included building human capacities, gender equality and reducing the vulnerability of the least developed countries to shocks through employment creation and increased productivity. The Conference had set an ambitious target of halving the number of least developed countries by 2021.

19. The Istanbul Programme of Action increased — from three years to six years — the period during which countries aspiring to "graduate" from the list would be weaned off the various privileges they enjoyed. It also requested the Economic and Social Council to conduct a periodic review of the implementation and coordination of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to include a review of the implementation of the Programme of Action in its annual ministerial reviews. In addition, the Development Cooperation Forum was to keep reviewing trends in international development cooperation, as well as policy coherence for

development, including for the least developed countries.

20. The Bureau would discuss how the Council would carry that mandate forward.

Highlights of the Development Cooperation Forum high-level Symposium in Bamako

21. **The President** said that on 5 and 6 May, he had attended the high-level Symposium in Mali in preparation for the 2012 Development Cooperation Forum. Its theme had been: "Gearing development cooperation towards the Millennium Development Goals: effectiveness and results". Some 150 participants had attended, from over 50 developing and developed countries. In keeping with the multi-stakeholder tradition of the Forum, civil society organizations, parliaments and local governments had also participated in the Symposium.

22. The meeting had identified a number of key messages on maximizing the results of aid to reduce poverty and achieve other Millennium Development Goals. It had also emphasized the importance of country ownership and leadership in defining, pursuing and assessing the results of development cooperation, including with respect to broad development goals, and the need to ensure sustainability and a medium- to long-term impact. Discussions had pointed to the need for clear benchmarks and tools to review how aid was contributing to the achievement of national development goals and the Millennium Development Goals.

23. The meeting had been extremely useful, particularly on the question of how to enhance aid effectiveness and mutual accountability.

Highlights of the pre-forum conference of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

24. **The President** said that he had attended the Pre-Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Doha, in preparation for the organization's upcoming 2011 Forum. The Pre-Forum had provided an opportunity to consider the views of civil society, assess the performance of the Alliance of Civilizations, enhance its relevance and see how its work could be targeted towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

25. He had provided information to the Pre-Forum on the work of the Council, with particular emphasis on the theme of education, which would be highlighted during the forthcoming substantive session. In his statement, he had indicated that key issues would include how to address the challenges of ensuring access to education, particularly for girls; how to enhance the quality of education; how to align the needs of economies with the skills produced by education systems; and how to address the question of burden-sharing in education in response to the "brain drain". With regard to the latter, he said that developing countries' massive investment in the education of their people must be acknowledged and that countries should work together to share the burden in order to minimize the consequences of the "brain drain" on migrants' countries of origin.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.